

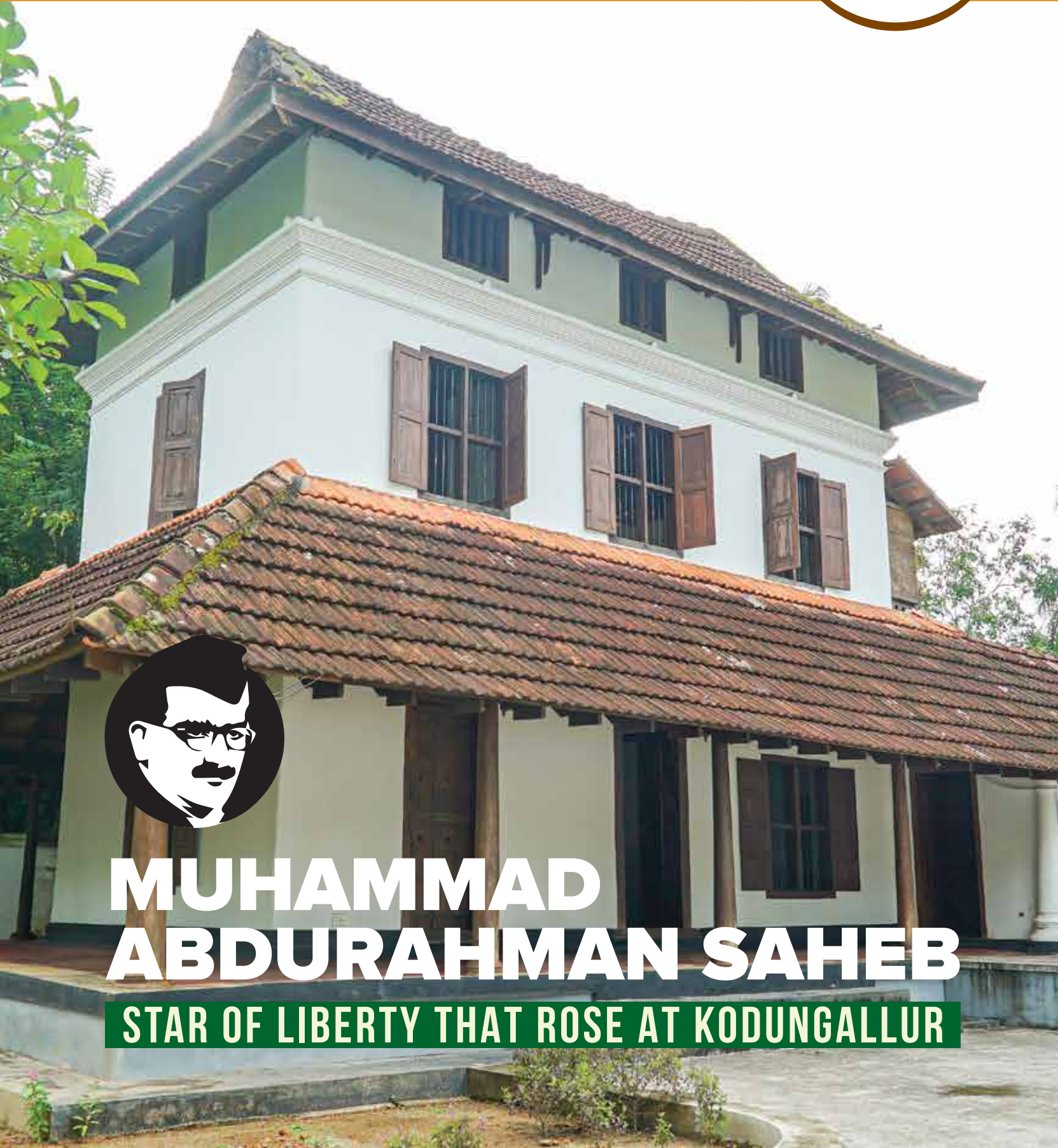


SEPTEMBER 2020

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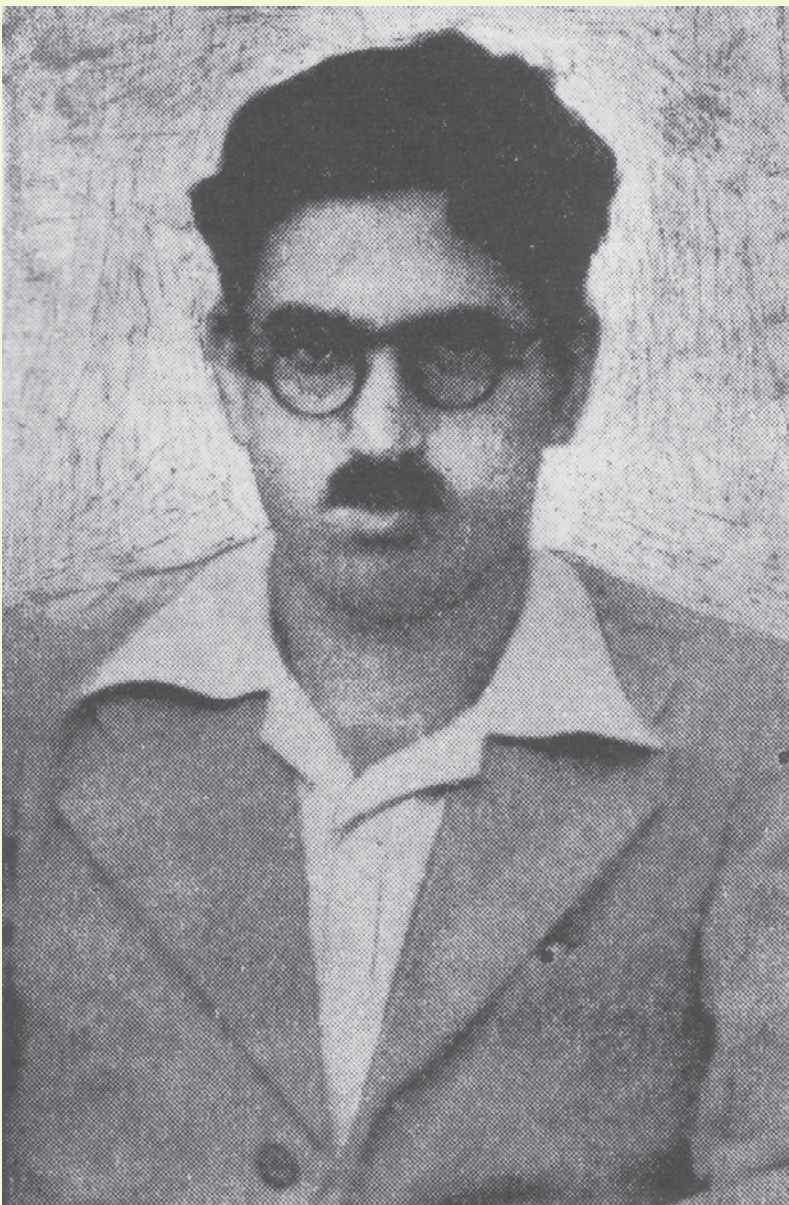


MUHAMMAD ABDURAHMAN SAHEB

STAR OF LIBERTY THAT ROSE AT KODUNGALLUR

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Let us sing raising voices free from our throat.

*The crimson spread of your renown for
generations to come!*

*No thrilling voice will ever linger in your ears.
What if it is so!*

Exalted soul! Muhammad Abdurahman!

These lines, Edassery, the beloved poet of Malayalam, wrote, still echo from the wall of time. Abdurahman Saheb was a brave soldier who fought until death for the new heaven of freedom. For this effulgent star of the Freedom Struggle, who had dreamt of a nation founded upon secular values and the concept of fraternity and had engaged in a relentless battle to attain it, the sobriquet, "Kerala's Subhash Chandra Bose," was not mere flattery; it was proof of his unmitigated battle bravery.

Abdurahman Saheb, born in Kodungallur in 1898, had his education from Basel Mission College at Kozhikode and then from Madras Presidency College. Abdurahman who had read Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's *Khilafat* and *Jazeera* ul Arab realised that it was time to sacrifice one's own life for the freedom of the nation, and prepared himself to become an offering for the independence of India. It was a time when the Nationalist Movement was

gathering momentum under Gandhi's leadership in the 1920s. Breaking off his education midway, he returned to Kozhikode. Abdurrahman's entry into politics was by taking part in the State Convention of Indian National Congress in Ottappalam in 1921. From then till his death, it was a time of battle-intensity for that fighter.

1921 was a blood-splattered chapter in the history of Nationalist Struggle in Kerala. The rebellion led by the armed Mappilas against the British had reached its zenith. On 24 July 1921, Abdurrahman Saheb organised an Ulema meeting at Paathaar, near Ponnani. He tried his best to bring the armed Muslims back to the path of peace. Although he failed in those attempts, he succeeded in saving a large chunk of the Muslim community from inevitable disaster and in directing them towards peaceful means of struggle.

He was a firmly religious yet profoundly secular person. He wrote consistently, and also went around the country making rousing speeches, delivering the message to the people that all of us were

brothers and sisters, and that the spearhead of protest of the whole of Indians comprising Hindus, Muslims and others should be thrust against British domination. It was through the efforts of Abdurrahman Saheb that the pathetic living conditions of the people of Malabar after the Mappila Rebellion, was brought to the attention of the national leaders. He used to write ceaselessly in publications including The Hindu. The British, provoked by this truth-speaking, charged a case against Abdurrahman Saheb, and he was sentenced to a prison term of 21 years.

It was to the Alipur Jail of Bellary that Abdurrahman Saheb was sent. Even in jail, Saheb did not cease his struggle. Saheb's effort observing a fast to defend his personal religious belief and secularism was in the Gandhian way. He fasted for 23 days in the jail, for the right to wear clothes that would reach only below his knee to enable him to do namaaz.

Abdurrahman Saheb was released from prison on 11 August 1923. He then travelled all over north India and presented before the prominent

national leaders, the hellish suffering of the ordinary people of Malabar in the aftermath of the Mappila Rebellion. He vehemently opposed the "Andamans Scheme" of the British providing for the exile of the rebels to the Andamans, and also the Mappila Outrage Act that empowered the police to open fire against Mappilas indiscriminately.

The Al Ameen daily newspaper that Abdurrahman Saheb founded and began operations on 12 October 1924 was the brave voice of Malayalam journalism. The primary purpose of Al Ameen was to attract Muslims into the mainstream of the Nationalist Struggle. Abdurrahman Saheb faced stiff opposition equally from the savarna leadership within the Congress and the conservatives among the Muslims.

Abdurrahman Saheb was there at the forefront of the Salt Satyagraha too. Saheb and the leaders of the struggle along with him who made salt from seawater on 12 May 1930 at a beach in Kozhikode were arrested and mostcruelly tortured by Police Superintendent Amu and his men. Later, even from the jail, he wrote in Al





Ameen. His bold declaration, "We won't bend our heads before the foreign devil, as long as we live!" appeared in Al Ameen. The British regime confiscated the Al Ameen press in 1930 and sealed it.

He was elected to the Madras Assembly in 1937 from the Eranad-Valluvanad Constituency with a considerable margin of votes. Saheb took over as the President of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee for the period 1938-40. His leadership had played a significant role in holding the Malayalees together irrespective of caste and creed and leading them into the battleground of the Freedom Struggle. Later, when Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose founded Forward Bloc, Saheb gave up all his positions in the Congress and became the founder of the Kerala wing of the Forward Bloc. Right after Netaji was arrested, Abdurahman Saheb was also arrested on 3 July 1940, as per the provisions of the National Security Act.

He was released from prison only after he spent five years in jail. At that time when the issue of Partition of India giving rise to Pakistan was heating up, Abdurahman Saheb who opposed the idea of Partition, had to face fierce opposition from many quarters. As he was returning from a public programme in Kodyathur near Kozhikode on the night of 23 November 1945, Saheb died after collapsing on the way.

Abdurahman Saheb, the brave son of Kodungallur, is the most important personality in the political history of Kerala. Behind several democratic developments that happened in post-Independence Kerala, there is the unmistakable stamp of the influence of Abdurrahman Saheb. It was the Dissent Note Abdurahman Saheb presented, along with E.M.S. Namboodirippad and E.Kannan--as a member of the committee that was appointed by the Rajaji Cabinet in 1939 to study about land-relations--that became the foundational document for all future land reforms in Kerala.

Remembering Abdurahman Saheb who stood firm in his fight for India's Independence and held fast to his religious faith and secular thinking, poet K. Ayyappa Paniker wrote years later:

Pardon me, leaders, when I muse

That there has not been someone like him in the past

Nor in later years!

Muhammad Abdurahman was a fighter who always surged forward in the fight against the British. A symbol of independence that never knew subjugation.

DISCOVERING THE KOTTAPURAM-MALA WATERWAY



The boat trip was organized as part of discovering the Kottapuram-Mala waterway. The boat trip started from Kottappuram and the Muziris Heritage Project MD. Shri. PM Noushad, Marketing Manager Shri. Ibrahim Zabin, Finance Manager Ms Sony Roy and the museum managers, Drs. Mithun C Sekhar, Sajjana Vasant Raj and Nimmi KB were present in the journey. VR Sunilkumar MLA received the group which reached Mala Kadavu through the new waterway, and The MLA joined the group in their return journey.



BUS STAND INAUGURATION

VR Sunil Kumar MLA inaugurated Kodungallur Muziris bus stand. The bus stand was constructed and handed over to the Muziris Heritage Project based on an agreement made with the Heritage Project when the three acres of land at Kavil Kadavu was handed over to the Corporation.



VISITOR'S CENTER INAUGURATION

The Muziris Visitor's Center at Kavilkadavu, Kodungallur was inaugurated online by the Minister of Co-operation and Tourism, Shri. Kadakampally Surendran. The visitor centre has been built as an entrance to the Muziris Heritage Project area. The Muziris Visitor's Centre was set up to provide tourists visiting the project area with complete information about the project, the project areas and other tourist destinations in Kerala. A two-storey museum will soon be set up on the three-acre land handed over by the Kodungallur municipality at the cost of Rs 3 crore. Adv VR Sunilkumar MLA presided over the function. Kodungallur Municipal Corporation Chairman KR Jaithran, Ward Councilor Rekha Salprakash, Heritage Project Managing Director PM Nowshad, Conservation Consultancy Dr Benny Kuriakose, Marketing Manager Ibrahim Sabin and Finance Manager Kumari Soni Roy were present.



STAFF TRAINING




Organized a training class for security and housekeeping staff working under the Heritage Project. M. D. Shri. PM Nowshad conducted the class for them.



OCTOBER 2020

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**KODUNGALLUR
KUNJIKKUTTAN
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THE LORD OF
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KODUNGALLUR KUNJIKKUTTAN THAMPURAN THE LORD OF THE MALAYALAM LANGUAGE



Kodungallur Kunjikkuttan Thampuran is the brightest star of the heritage of Kodungallur. The most significant signature of Kodungallur for all times in the history of the Malayalam language. Kunjikkuttan Thampuran’s life which comprised wisdom, poetry, and industriousness at once, remains the proud cenotaph that Kodungallur has raised facing Time.

Though many are the contributions of Kunjikkuttan Thampuran, the greatest of them all amounts to nothing short of a miracle--the word-for-word translation of the Mahabharata. Over 874 days continuously, he translated into Malayalam, the 1, 25,000 slokas of the Mahabharata, word for word, metre for metre. Vidvan K. Prakasham, who carried out the prose translation of the Mahabharata later, described this penance-like feat, as “unbelievable.” Thampuran could accomplish this, owing solely to his unlimited word power and genius. Therefore, Malayalam has reverentially assigned to him the sobriquet “Keralavyasan.”

Kunjikkuttan Thampuran was born in the Kodungallur royal family on 18 September 1864. His father was Venmani Achchan Namboodirippadu of the famed poet-duo known as Venmanikkavikal (Venmani Poets). And his mother was Kiunjippilla Thampuratty of the Kodungallur Kovilakam. The poetic genius known as “Venmani Mahan” was Kunjikkuttan Thampuran’s half-brother. Though his real name was “Rama Varma” everyone called him by the pet name of “Kunjan” or “Kunjukuttan”, literally meaning, “the cherished, petite one.” Later, this name stuck along with his fame. At that time, Kodungallur Kovilakam was a gurukulam which was the repository of all wisdom and knowledge connected to poetry, drama, poetics, aesthetics etc. Kunjikkuttan spent his childhood along with students of literature from all over Kerala who

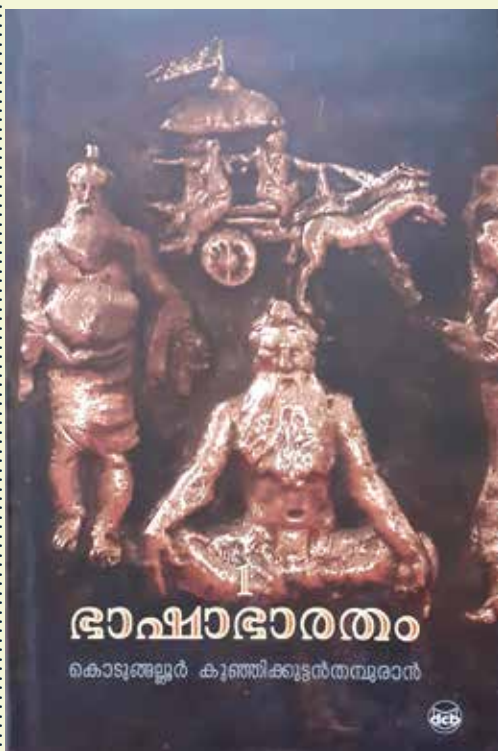
stayed and studied at the gurukulam.

Beginning with Vilappil Unni Asan, Kunjikkuttan had his education from Moonnaamkoo Godavarma Thampuran, and from his uncle, Kunjiramavarma Thampuran. Kunjikkuttan Thampuran's gurukulam-based education consisted of diverse subjects like Kaavyam (Poetry), Meemaamsa (Critical Investigation), Vyakaranam (Grammar), Tharkkam (Dialectics), Jyothisham (Astrology) etc. Vyaakaranam or Grammar was his favourite subject. He had an unflinching grip on grammar; even when engaged in composing poetry at a fantastic speed, he had based it on his concentrated study of this favourite subject at an early age. From age seven, he began to write poetry. From his early years, he became unparalleled in his expertise in instant poetry composition and aksharasloka (the precursor to Antakshari). From his adolescence, his attention was focused solely on poetry, which became a great good fortune for Malayalam literature.

Kunjikkuttan Thampuran's first work, Kavibhaaratam, was published when he was 22 years old. He had immense self-confidence and pride about his own genius. He described himself in his work Lakshanaasangam published in 1065 M.E. (1980 CE) as "The Lord of the people, Kunjikkuttan, inspired instant poet, diadem." It was this confidence and perseverance that enabled him to take up and execute substantial literary projects that others would not even dare to conceive. Along with instant poetry, Thampuran was also adept at instant playwriting. He composed within a record five hours Gangaavatharanam, a play in five acts, startling scholars.

By the end of the 19th century, there came about a significant change in sensibility, literally a paradigm shift, in Malayalam literature: The Kerala Varma Movement, led by Kerala Varma Valiyakoil Thampuran, founded on a pro-Sanskrit adherence by scholars, and the Venmani Movement which was nurtured under the auspices of the Kodungallur Kalari or gurukulam. Both the movements have made immense

contributions to Malayalam literature. The Venmani Movement was led by Kunjikkuttan Thampuran. It was this movement that led the Malayalam language to its pure form, from its Sanskrit-predominated milieu. Several poets who lined up under the leadership of Thampuran, writing poetry rejecting Sanskrit diction entirely and relying solely on pure Malayalam words, grew into an epoch-making movement. The shifting over of an influential group of poets who were Sanskrit scholars, to the indigenous poetic style of Malayalam, strengthened the language and literature, and its poetry, substantially, and led to their development on an immense scale. Kunjikkuttan



Thampuran has composed several works like Koodal Manikyam and Paalulli Charitam in this style. Many of Thampuran's important literary works were published in academic journals like Vidyavinodiini, Malayala Manorama, Rasikaranjini etc.

Thampuran's numerous contributions in different areas like Rhetoric (Alamkaaram), Philology (Shabdham), Indigenous Physician's Practice (Vaidyam), Grammar (Vyakaranam),

have enriched Malayalam literature. Leelatilakam, the manuscript of which Thampuran discovered from the residence of Kottakkal P.V. Krishna Varier in 1903, is an invaluable asset of Malayalam literature.

In translating classical literature into Malayalam, not very many have matched the effortless and exactness that Thampuran had attained. Several Sanskrit classics like Bhagavatham, Kadambari, Kathasaaram, Vikramorvaseeyam, Ascharyachoodaamani, and Abhijnaanasakuntalam arrived in Malayalam literature through Thampuran. He has also translated Shakespeare's Hamlet into Malayalam.

Even amidst these enormous creative efforts, Thampuran was an inveterate organizer. He established a literary organization named "Kodungallur Bhashaposhini Sabha".

Thampuran died on 22 January 1913, at the age of 48. Even at the time of his death, that industrious soul had been convinced that there were several vital projects to be completed and yearned to work hard for the rest of his life. After the penance of translating Mahabharata was over, he told his friends:

Bhaaratam is over, the weight (bhaaram) is off me

I should take on a bigger one next,

Searching in a different area and holding fast

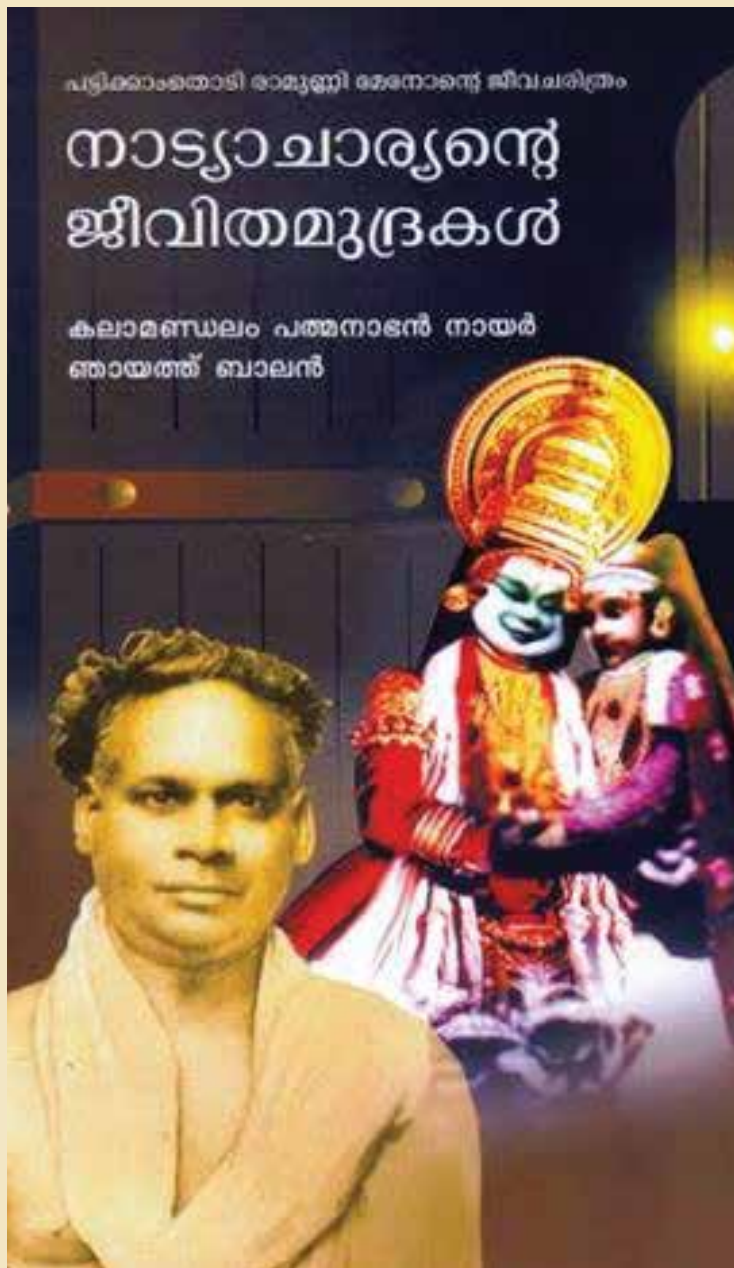
To the interest it generates.

Kunjikkuttan Thampuran embarked on his eternal journey, leaving behind the dream of translating all the eighteen puranas into Malayalam.

The magical gem that translates instantly, "Kima kurvata Sanjaya?" into Malayalam as "Entē cheytu Snjayaa?" (What did he/they do Sanjaya?) has remained an all-time wonder in the history of Malayalam language. Kodungallur Kunjikkuttan Thampuran lives on in the language as long as Malayalam exists, as the beacon that is erected on the grand heritage of Kodungallur.

The Imprints of a Natyacharya's Life

The Kodungallur Touch in the History of Art



Naatyaachaaryante Jeevithamudrakal (The Imprints of a Natyacharya's Life), occupies an essential place in the history of Kerala's art. It is the biography of Pattikkamthodi Ravunni Menon, who was the supreme maestro of Kathakali. This book is the historical record of a particular time-period, too. It is also connected deeply with the Kodungallur Kalari—the gurukulam. Because it was here that Ravunni Menon learned rasaabhinaya or acting of the navarasas. The depth, authoritativeness, and details of the Kodungallur Kalari of those times are referred to in this book.

Pattikkamthodi was learning under the great instructors, Cheria Kochchunni Thampuran, known as "Kavisaarvabhoman" and Kunjunni Thampuran. To Pattikkamthodi who arrived with an introduction letter from Olappamanna Namboodirippadu, Kochchunni Thampuran gave the Natyashastra as a reading text. The next day, Ravunni Menon, after having browsed through the text, approached

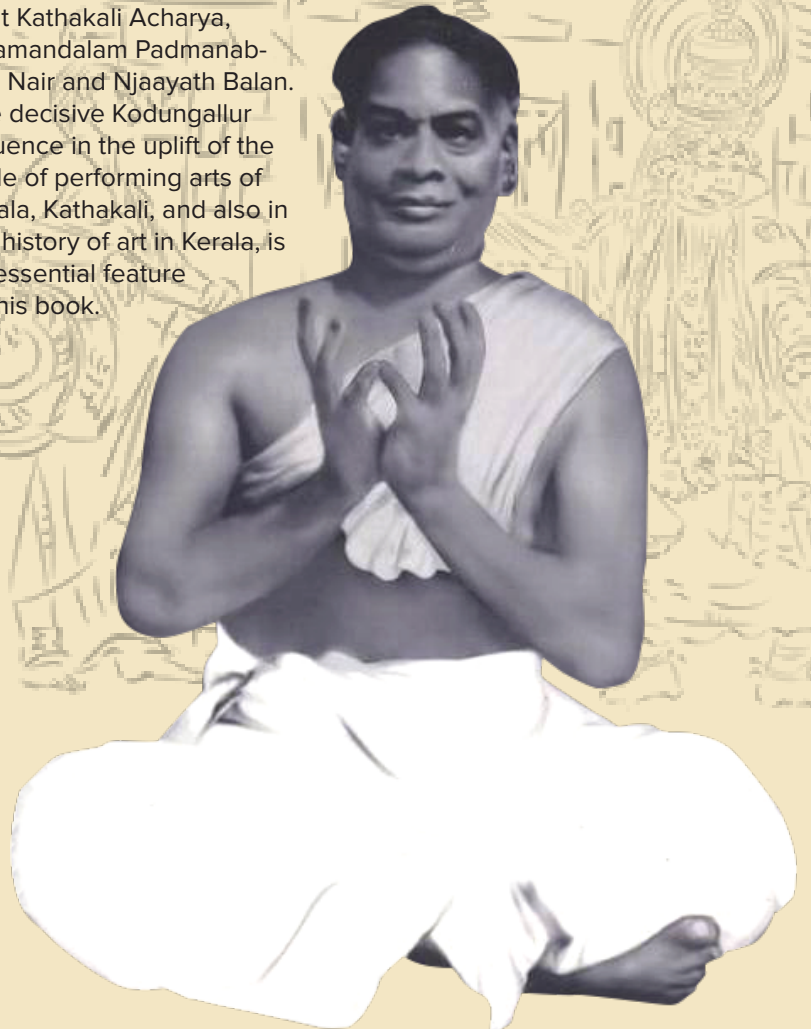
Kochchunni Thampuran and asked him whether one would be able to learn all that had been set out in that book during one's entire lifetime. Kochchunni Thampuran replied: "The Natyashastra is not a simple text. I asked you to read it to impress upon you its greatness. All this text is not needed for a Kathakali practitioner. I will copy for you whatever is required." Kochchunni Thampuran also instructed him to do intense worship of Sri Kurumba Bhagavathy of Kodungallur for a month. This residence of Ravunni Menon at Kodungallur changed his life on stage and off stage, dramatically. The book deals with the changes and transformation that the Kathakali practice of Pattikkamthodi underwent under the influence of the Kodungallur Kalari.

Many of the experiences of Pattikkamthodi during his sojourn at Kodungallur Kalari are described colourfully in this book. From these stories that take on the characteristics of myth and fantasy, the knowledge-culture of the Kodungallur of those days wax luminously before us.

The chapter in this biography titled "Kodungallurile Naatyopasana" (The Acting-worship at Kodungallur), can convince a discerning reader, of the breadth of the realm of knowledge contained within the Kodungallur Kovilakam of those days. Mahakavi Kodungallur Kunjikkuttan Thampuran was mostly on tour in connection with his practice of poetry those days. Yet, whenever he returned for a brief while to the Kovilakam, he used to discuss with Pattikkamthodi, matters relating to the world of art outside. It was Kunjikkuttan Thampuran who let Pattikkamthodi know about the sarcastic gossip circulating among his brother-Kathakali artistes, who said: "Ravunni Menon has gone to Kodungallur to get rasam from there; when he comes back, let us all

get some of it!" (Rasam, besides its meaning related to Indian poetics, also means 'mercury,' as well as 'the hot vegetable soup-like preparation drank or eaten mixed along with rice.') Though this remark was passed in utter sarcasm, history has proven that the entire Kathakali fraternity received the rasam that Pattikkamthodi got from Kodungallur (the rasa training that Pattikkamthodi underwent at the Kodungallur gurukulam), and it turned out to be the dominant taste or style of Kathakali!

In this remarkable book on the history of Kathakali, the greatness of the knowledge traditions of Kodungallur is recorded in-depth. This biography has been written jointly by Pattikkamthodi's son, and prominent Kathakali Acharya, Kalamandalam Padmanabhan Nair and Njaayath Balan. The decisive Kodungallur influence in the uplift of the pride of performing arts of Kerala, Kathakali, and also in the history of art in Kerala, is an essential feature of this book.



KOTTAPPURAM CHILDREN'S PARK INAUGURATION



16/10/2020

Kodungallur MLA Adv. V. R. Sunil Kumar while inaugurating the Kottappuram Children's park said that the project to beautify the entire area as part of the Muziris project is underway and that it should be expanded to more regions. He added that CCTV cameras would be installed and the project has been able to develop the history of Kodungallur through Muziris. The MLA said all attempts to distort the cultural history of secular Kodungallur, which includes the Thiruvanchikulam temple, Cheraman Palli and Keezhathali, would be thwarted. At the meeting, Municipal Chairman K.R. Jaithran presided over the function. Muziris Managing Director P.M. Noushad welcomed the gathering and the Vice-Chairperson of the Corporation Smt. Honey Peethambaran, Thankamani Subramanian, K.S. Kaisab, Johnny. V.M, Smt. Prince Martin participated in the event. Muziris Marketing Manager, Shri. Ibrahim Sabin proposed the vote of thanks.

INAUGURATION OF THE CONSERVATION WORKS OF PATHINETTARAYALAM KOVILAKAM



16/10 /2020

ET Tyson Mash MLA inaugurated the renovation of the Pathinettarayalam Kovilakam, located near the Edavilang Village Office. The ancient Kovilakam is being renovated as part of the Muziris Heritage Project. The completely dilapidated building will retain its old charm and will be surrounded by sidewalks, seating, gates and walkways.

Edavilangu Grama Panchayat President Shri. AP Adarsh presided over the function. PM Noushad, Managing Director, Muziris Heritage Project, welcomed the audience. Panchayat Vice President Smt. Mini Thankappan, Block Panchayat Member MV Indira, Standing Committee Chairman MG Anilkumar, Ambika Ashokan, Suma Watson, Ward Member PK Suresh Kumar and Village Officer Smt. Philomina addressed the gathering. Ibrahim Zabin, Marketing Manager, Muziris Heritage Project, thanked the audience.



THE BOAT TRIP OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILORS

Kodungallur Municipal Councilors took the hop-on-hop-off boat trip. Kodungallur MLA Shri VR Sunilkumar was present. The group visited the Paliyam Palace, the Ayyappan Memorial and the estuary.